

Appl. No.: 09/693,342
Amendment Dated August 13, 2004
Reply to Office Action of June 18, 2004

FKC-103US

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1, 3-17 and 19-37 are pending in the above-identified application. Claim 35 was objected to as including an informality. This ground for objection is overcome by the amendment of claim 35. Claims 1, 3-17 and 19-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of Angotti et al. (US 006182059B1) and Hall (US006026396). This ground for rejection is overcome by the amendments to claims 1, 17, 30, 35, 36 and 37.

In particular, claim 1 is amended to recite that the respective message identifying means uniquely identifies each received message. Support for this amendment may be found throughout the specification and in particular on page 18 line 30.

Claim 1 is also amended to clarify that the second electronic message is other than a response message to the first electronic message. The basis for this amendment may be found throughout the specification and in particular in relation to the external agent and unit transfer cases (see for example page 17 lines 29 to page 18 lines 3).

Claim 1 is further amended to recite that the returned second message, or derivative thereof, is associated with the first electronic message stored inside storage means and that this association causes, upon generation of a response message to said first electronic message by said at least one mail client, any response text generated by said one first agent in respect of said first electronic message and any response text included in said returned second electronic message, or derivative thereof, to be included in said response message. Support for this amendment may be found in the description of the external agent and unit transfer cases (see for example page 25 lines 12-23).

Neither Angotti et al., Hall nor their combination disclose the following features:

- A Means for generating a routing tag, which routing tag includes the respective unique message identifying means associated with said first electronic message; wherein the mail client is arranged to cause said routing tag to be included in the second electronic message and to cause said second electronic message to be sent out of said electronic processing system.

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- B The classification module being arranged ... wherein said processing includes associating, by means of said respect unique message identifier included in said routing tag, said returned second electronic message, or derivative thereof, with said first electronic message stored in said storage means, and wherein the association between the returned second electronic message, or derivative thereof, and the first electronic message stored in said storage means causes, upon generation of a response message to said first electronic message by said at least one mail client, any response text generated by said one first agent in respect of said first electronic message and any response text included in said returned second electronic message, or derivative thereof, to be included in said response message.

As set forth in Claim 1, amended Claims 17, 30, 35, 36 and 37 include similar recitations.

Since neither Hall nor Angotti et al. disclose the features recited above, it is respectfully submitted that their combined teachings cannot lead a skilled person to a system as claimed in Claims 1, 17, 30 and 35-37.

With respect to Hall, it is noted that a thread identifier identifies a thread of messages and does not uniquely identify any specific message within the thread. Accordingly, the thread identifier disclosed by Hall could not serve as the means for uniquely identifying each received message, as required by Claims, 1, 17, 30 and 35-37. In the subject invention as defined by the amended claims, each message is uniquely identified so that response texts from more than one source can be included in the response message to a specific first electronic message. This association cannot be achieved if a message is identified only by the thread to which it belongs.

It is also noted that when the Hall moderator decides to send a message, received from the first user, to all the list members (because it has determined that its knowledge base cannot adequately deal with the message) then, when any of the list members reply, their responses are simply passed back to the first user (see column 8 lines 29-62 of Hall). Hall does not suggest that various response texts from different sources can be concatenated in the manner recited in the amended Claims to provide a single response to the first message that deals with all of the aspects of the first message that require a response.

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With regard to Claim 3, it is respectfully submitted that neither Hall nor Angotti et al. disclose a routing tag that includes means for identifying an agent, or group of agents, associated with said electronic processing system. With reference to the statement at Item 7 of the Office Action, it is respectfully submitted that the routing tag in the context of Claim 1 cannot be compared to the "to:" or recipient field in an e-mail message. In this connection, it is noted that the "routing tag" disclosed by Hall (namely the thread identifier) is entirely separate from the "to:" or recipient field in the e-mail message. Similar comments apply to Angotti et al.

With regard to Claim 4, it is respectfully submitted that neither Hall nor Angotti et al. disclose a routing tag that includes means for identifying a class to which said first electronic message is deemed to belong.

It is also noted that the subject matter of Claim 15 is not disclosed or suggested by either Hall or Angotti et al. Furthermore, Applicants note that the limitations added by Claims 15 and 16 have not been specifically addressed in the Office Action. Accordingly, Applicants assume that these claims are merely objected to and would be in condition for allowance if rewritten to be independent in form and to include the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claim.

Accordingly, claims 1, 3-17 and 19-37 are not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Angotti et al. and Hall.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the objection to claim 35 and the rejection of claims 1, 3-17 and 19-37.

Respectfully submitted,


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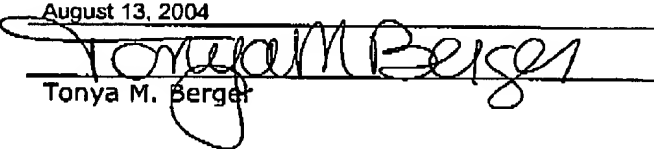
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